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Seminar on Sitar

आम्नाय-ग्रन्थालय,
परमनिधि, करौंदी
वाराणसी-5

-ग्रन्थालय
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आम्नाय—ग्रन्थालय,
धरतनिधि, करौंदी
वाराणसी-5

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INAUGURAL SPEECH

Presentation by

Prof Premlata Sharma

The immense popularity of *Sitar* has naturally prompted an enquiry by scholars into the history of this instrument. I welcome This effort of the SRA (Bombay Unit) in creating this opportunity for discussion on this important topic that is of interest both to the specialist and layman alike.

Serious research over the past two decades has exploded the myth that Amir Khusro was the inventor of *Sitar*. This myth first appeared in the *Madan-ul-Mausiqia* in the mid-nineteenth century. S.M. Tagore, in the last quarter of the 19th century tried to combine the above myth with the theory that *Tritantri* was the precursor of *Sitar*. Since then many scholars have made this myth popular and have perpetuated the above theory.

More recent scholars like Acharya K.C.D. Brahaspati, Dr. B.C. Deva and others have refuted the above myth and theory. The most recent detailed work is the Banaras Hindu University Dissertation of Dr. Allyn Miner (1981), soon to be released by Oxford University Press, Delhi. The Sitar first appeared in Delhi around 1740, being played by a brother of Na'mat Khan, 'Sadarang' in the court of Muhammad Shah. The predecessor of the *Sitar* was the Satar of Iran, or the Tambur, a fretted lute that entered India in the 12th or 13th century and became a well-known instrument in courts throughout North India. The replacement of the straight and thin bridge of the *tambur* or *setar* with a flat bridge in the Indian *Sitar* is perhaps the main distinguishing feature. Metal frets soon followed and both these and other developments like the widening of the neck and the increased size bore the influence of Been. This process of Indianisation and change to suit the needs of the time, music, context, etc. continued until the *Sitar* reached its present form.

The 20th century history of *Sitar* reflects the larger history of North Indian music and deserves the serious attention of students and scholars. I hope that the present gathering of musicians, scholars and students will take forward this enquiry.

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INTERACTION BETWEEN VOCAL & INSTRUMENTAL MUSIC

Presentation by
Pandit K.G. Ginde

Respected musicians and friends,

In today's seminar, I have been requested to discuss the co-relation between vocal and instrumental music. As explained by Dr. Premlata Sharmaji, in her speech a short while ago, a "geet", "dhun" or melody, whether sung or played on instrument will be identified as a "geet" or "song". But I want to quote an anecdote here. Late Aftab-e-Mousiqni Ustad Faiyaz Khan Saheb was accused of singing in "tant-ang". In 1936, at a well-attended conference, he announced, "During today's vocal presentation, anyone who feels that I am singing in "tant-ang" should stand up and object". That day there was not even a trace of "tant-ang" in his rendering. The fact that there can be dimension other than the "tant-ang" in vocal performance was thus revealed to the students of music like myself. We are all aware of the fact that in India, drupad music accompanied by the "been" was in practice for a long time. Unlike today, using of sarangi or "samvadini" for accompanying the khayal music was not in practice; instead the drupad form of music was performed to the accompaniment of "been".

In continuation with the descedants of Tansen, two distinct traditions, each representing "drupad" and "been" have been traced. "Been" was played to render only the drupad form of music. The alap performed during dhrupad-singing was known as 'Rupak-alap' and it was based on four distinct divisions of "sthayi", "antara", "sanchari" and "abhog". When "been" achieved the distinction of a solo-performing instrument, it is possible that some special techniques were evolved resulting into a characteristic style of 'been'-playing: As far as the influence of vocal music upon the instrument playing is concerned, embellishments like "sut", "meend", "gamak" that have been characteristic of vocal music are adopted

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by instrumentalists. Linking one note with the next, employing techniques such as using of 'anulagna' and 'poorvalagnakan' to maintain the continuous flow of a given note is the important characteristic of Indian music. In the plucked instruments like sitar, been, sarod, the left hand plays the melody while the right hand indicates the rhythm, whereas human voice can simultaneously produce both, the melody and the rhythm. The factors of svara (melody) and laya (rhythm) are of paramount importance in Indian music, be it vocal or instrumental. It is interesting to note as to how these factors undergo a change. I shall sing for you alap of a raga in 'nom-tom' style. You will notice that many elements of this demonstration have been adopted for instrument-playing (Demonstration-raga Jaunpuri). Please note how the voice indicates the laya (demo). These types of important phrases have been adopted by many 'been' players and also sitar-players. (demo) This is not a tan of antara. Even if I touch the upper octave Rishabh or Gandhar, I am still in sthayi (demo). Every raga has set patterns to approach the upper sa, called tan for antara. After singing that we can settle on the upper octave sa (demo). Note how slowly the laya of the rendering has been increased (demo). Now I am performing sanchari (demo). In continuation with sanchari, abhog section, signifying the closing of alap section will be performed (demo). Now we come to the next step with increasing tempo. This has been referred to as 'yati-prastar' in our ancient treatises i.e. to use yatis for exposition (demo). This section of alapti is dominated by laya. It could be surmised that this feature which is the characteristic of right hand of an instrumentalist may be adopted by vocalists (demo). Note the similarity to jhala playing of instrument (demo). Thus we can see that in alap section, the instrument follows the vocal technique while during the second half, when the laya increases, vocal music follows instrumental patterns. I have heard great sitar players like Inayat Khan Saheb and Hamid Khan Saheb of Lucknow. They laid stress on alap-playing. Hamid Hussein Khan Saheb's sitar was rather huge, say of the size between ordinary sitar and surbahar. It had a broad "dandi" and therefore seven note meend could be easily produced on his sitar. He played more of 'been'-ang alap incorporating meend-s.

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His performance showed heavy influence of gayaki (vocal) baj. Some sitariya-s developed the right hand technique very much. By improvising upon the bol-s like dir, da, ra, dadir, dara, etc., some instrumentalists created a new style showing the dominance of 'laya' aspect. Hyder Khan Saheb of Delhi used to play with two mizrab-s in this style. He had innovated a new technique of playing dir-dir in fast laya using two mizrab-s (demo). During conversation with him, I realised that many gat-s have been composed based on the "tarana" form of vocal music that includes phrases like nadirdir, tumdirdir, tantom, etc. (demo Bihag tarana) (demo of tan-nana). This kind of vistar has been adopted for "gatkari". Meanwhile, I had a chat with Nissar Hussein Khan Saheb, and as Premlataji also knows, during the last seminar, Khan Saheb stated that he has adopted certain instrumental techniques to make tarana popular (demo of dirdirtananana). Thus this kind of mizrab techniques have been adopted for tarana singing. This has certainly enriched the tarana form, which otherwise suffers from a limited scope of improvising a few phrases and tan-s. Nissar Hussein Khan Saheb has thus made an innovation by adopting the instrumental technique which has helped popularising tarana. In this way there has always been interaction between vocal and instrumental forms of music.

The element of layakari, if presented beyond a certain limit, tries to dominate the melody and damages the serene quality of music. This may be the reason due to which many musicians today are turning towards the gayaki-ang. When the khayal music replaced the drupad form of music, certain elements of khayal were adopted by instrumentalists (demo of "khatka", "murki"). These embellishments had no place in drupad but they have an important place in khayal and have been adopted by sitar-players (demo of "Jamjama"). Such alankars rendered with "jamjama" have also been adopted by sitar players. This is the influence of vocal music upon the instrumentalists. So much so, that today vocal compositions (bandish) are preferred by the instrumentalists rather than the masitkhani or razakhani gat-s due to their popularity. (demo — bandish in raga-Bahar) If a gat is played based on this bandish

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(demo) and improvised upon, there is nothing wrong or bad because these kinds of changes do take place with time. Such changes can be also transformed into regular practice. This is a cycle, in which different styles come to prominance and fade off.

In this way there is a close relation between vocal and instrumental music, rather they are complementary to each other. The elements that can be easily expressed through voice, remain incomplete when played on instruments but are complemented by other related techniques. Similarly, to enrich the melodic content expressed through voice, several instrumental techniques have been adopted: Thus, the dialogue between voice and instrument has been prevalent in the past and will continue to exist in future also.

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BEEN

Presentation by

Ustad Zia Mohiuddin Dagar

Today I am rather unwell but wish to talk to you about 'been'. I am a singer as well as a 'been' player. Vocal music has a status of an emperor and no instrument can really compete with vocal music. As very well explained by Pandit Gindeji, it is interesting to see what elements from vocal music have been adopted by instrumentalists. A note can be held for a long time by the voice but no instrument will be able to imitate this expression. For this purpose, certain modifications will have to be made in the 'gati' of this expression. Thus in the place of today's bol-s such as da, ra, dir, etc. bol-s like na, ru, rom, ri, ra, na, etc. were employed. The concepts of 'ghat' and 'pat' were prevalent in olden days. The 'ghat' indicated strokes played by the middle finger or 'madhyama' whereas the 'pat' indicated strokes played by the index finger or 'tarjani'. These were combined to give patterns such as "tunga tungat", "tungi tungat" and so on. Later, from the bol-s like "dagad-dad", today's dir da dir da were evolved. I have learnt this fact from my Guruji. I don't know the shastra but for that purpose behenji (Dr. Premlata Sharma) is here. The relationship between the vocal music and veena, among drupadiya-s, and their four gharana-s used to be so intimate that if ever there was any inadequecy in singing, it was compensated by playing it properly on the 'been'.

I often questioned my Ustad as to why he did not consider 'been'-playing as a profession. He used to answer that he had not sought permission to play it professionally but likes to play it for enriching his vocal music. Every gharana has its own style of 'been'-playing. The major changes occured when the daughter of Tansen was married to Misri Singh. (I am not criticizing). The family of Misri Singh practiced rabab playing. The style of rabab playing did not have scope for bringing out the beauty of the notes as it comprised of bol-s like "kat kat kit, dhum kit kat

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kat, nagana kit tak dhum" and so on. Where as 'been'-playing did not have scope for such bol-s describing "tar-paran", "lad-lapet" and "lad-guthav". In shastra-s, if there is any mention of such elements being associated with 'been'-playing, I would like to know. The descendants of this family desired to adopt the beauty of 'been' and at the same time did not want the rabab to become obsolete. Some of the techniques of rabab playing were transferred to the 'been' and a new characteristic baj (style) of 'been' was evolved. Prior to this, 'been' was primarily used for accompanying the dhrupad-alap. But after this change, a distinct style of 'been' playing was evolved. The style of 'been'-playing was adopted for playing sur-singar, of course with a slight modifications in the total presentation techniques. Later on the style was also adopted for playing surbahar, sitar and sarod. E.g. when a certain piece is played on these instruments and just as the vibrations are dying down, a stroke is played on chikari. This is a 'been'-technique that has been adopted. Similarly, khatka, murki, jamjama, etc. were partly adopted by sarangi.

The alap and jod presented during the 'been' performance had the profound influence on other instruments. The mizrabs of 'been' are adopted by other instruments with appropriate modifications. Once Acharya Briharpatiji had questioned me, "how many mizrab-s are prevalent in 'been'-playing?" I said, "360". "But how many do you actually play?" I said, "two and half only", i.e. da, ra (one each) and dra (half). The close relationship that exists between voice and 'been'-playing is demonstrated here by my shagird who is like my son. If he sings alone, there will be difference in his alap patterns. Here, 'been' will be played by my son, Bahauddin. The 'been' will try to follow the vocal patterns. The inadequecy in his playing will be compensated by me. (demo yaman alap vocal alternating with 'been') People say that learn vocal music before playing an instrument. But it should be that vocal music which deserves imitation on instrument. (demo alap yaman).

The way in which the singer is dwelling on pancham, the 'been' will not be able to follow. Therefore, a short pause will

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have to be given on pancham, so that the 'been' will be able to follow. (demo — Kharaj alap on 'been').

I have also heard from many musicians that by singing dhrupad, the female voice is damaged. Do you mean to say that Gopal Nayak's daughter who used to practice dhrupad had a damaged voice? There is a difference in the gamak to be sung by male and female voice. If I do (demo), a woman won't be able to imitate that. Why force things that are naturally impossible? I have a number of women students also. There is no problem.

Similarly, if I sing (demo), 'been' will not be able to follow that expression. Every expression needs to be executed with proper emphasis ("vajan"). E.g. jod (demo) alternate voice and 'been'.

In fact, we have three types of gati-s i.e. vilambit, madh and ati-madh. There are ten characteristics of tant (instrument) which are not well-known — "saj, sahaj, gahan, jhurat, purat, tikh, chokh, lag, dant and svarasangat." Saj means tuning the saj or the instrument. Sahaj is playing or "chedchad". "Gahan" is to begin, "jurat" and "purat" are the usage of particular places for striking the mizrab. "Tik, "chok" and "nau" means playing 3, and 4 notes using vibration of a single stroke. In ascending if a shruti of higher note is employed, e.g. Sa, Resa, Gasa, Masa, etc. it is called lag. Same way if it is in Descending, it is known as dant. "Svarasangat" is the vistar. These are the ten characteristics. Later on as time changed, "murki, jamjama", etc. were also introduced. In fact these are kind of gamak-s only.

After this, the section of drut follows (demo) alternating with voice and been. This section of alap known as 'ati-drut' by us, follows after this section. As these two performers are still in the process of learning, they need more riyaz (practice) to effectively illustrate this section of alap. (demo) This is known as 'pat-chedan'. The reference to this expression is found in 'Sangit Ratnakar'.

I remember a few words of a dhrupad composition "been ke bhed ko janat hai buddhiman, char tal do hi tar murcchana karat

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hai prastar" (pardon me, I don't remember the exact text). Further, "Nishad ko jache tab hot ujiara", it ends like "drupad dhamar alap ragan ko sur de tab hot beenkar". What is the meaning of Nishad ko jache tab hot ujiara? Nishad has two sruti-s, viz. kakali and kaishiki. Therefore it means that if one goes beyond Nishad, you touch the shadaja.

Then we have khamaj ang jaijaiwanti and Desh ang jaijaiwanti. demo (composition devoid of komal gandhar). Please note here that komal gandhar was never employed. I had a talk with Thakur Jaidevsinghji. He told me that the komal gandhar was brought into this scale to provide a romantic touch of viyoga sringara. Now you will hear a dhrupad composition in khamaj ang Jaijaiwanti which is specially practiced by the beenkar-s. Its text is — "Hu to chit chahat piya ke milaneko, Hu to nirash bhayi bindaraban basake, kar churi phor daro, moti mala tod dalo, kajra mein dhoye daru jamaname dhaske". (demo of the same composition). We sing alap based on such compositions.

I have made this 'been'. Many people have raised an objection for the position in which this instrument is held by us. As you know, the position in which the instrument was held earlier was in respect to mehfil and mandir (Adab-e-mehfil and Adab-e-mandir). Now there is no such question. Scientifically thinking, the new position of keeping it down helps to enhance the volume of sound. There is no mention in any of our old treatises, of the so called rule that the instrument should be placed on one's shoulder. Acharya Brihaspati had said that it may be easier to sit with the instrument now. The instrument weighs ten kilograms. Let any beenkar demonstrate by placing it on his shoulder for five minutes. To sit with the instrument placed on one's shoulder used to be the tradition (ibadat). Today, we sit in a manner that we can see the audience face to face. After researching for about 15 years and taking help of the old treatises, I have made a 'chala-veena', so that for every note that I play, I get consonant effect (samvad). E.g in order to obtain the correct rishabh of Darbari or Yaman, I can move the respective fret. Now I shall try to demonstrate

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this before you. If I fail, please pardon me. The technique of elaborating raga-s on 'been' is different from that adopted for other instruments. Now, I am presenting a raga which is a type of sarang. (demo) Note the "nishad". This "nishad" is different. It does not resemble the "nishad" practiced by the South Indian musicians.

(Demo — Sarang prakar — alap) Many gharana-s of 'been' became popular. Styles of playing many instruments including sitar, are influenced by 'been' — playing. I myself played sitar and sursingar. Of course, these instruments are also influenced by vocal music. With time, lot of changes took place in dhrupad. Some adverse changes were due to the patronage offered by kings who were publicity seekers. Today, the listeners sometimes behave irresponsibly.

We are very much trying to keep the tradition alive. I have received no support of any kind from the government, nor do I expect any help.

Thus, I have explained my style of 'been'-playing. There might be other styles that are practiced by other people. I do not have any objection to other styles. During the course of my presentation, if I have hurt any person, please forgive me.

(Note added by Shri Chandrashekar Naringrekar — disciple of Dagar Saheb)

Dagar Saheb who played the 'Been' for several years before western audience, felt that the listeners there, are real connoisseurs of music appreciating the depth and sublimity of Dhrupad performance especially alap Jod and Jhala. It would be wrong to presuppose that audience prefer musical gimmickry. If properly exposed to the pristine qualities of Indian music and performed accordingly, the audience reciprocates most sensitively).

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MAIHAR GHARANA

Presentation by
Deepak Chaudhury
(Disciples of Pt. Ravi Sankar)

Respected musicians, musicologists and music lovers, I really feel myself very much honoured to be here in this unique Seminar on sitar to represent 'Maihar Gharana' of Sitar playing. More so in this city there are a few senior 'gurubhai's' of mine as Vijay Raghavji, Jamaluddin Bharatiya Saheb, Shamimbhai, Kartick Kumarji. But as my Guruji Pandit Ravishankarji entrusted me to be here to do this job, I am here. In fact, it was named as 'Maihar Gharana' since last 20 years only that is after Allauddin Khan Saheb died and his son and our Khalifa Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, his disciple and son-in-law Pandit Ravishankarji, daughter Annapoornaji, Nikhil Banerjee — all these instrumentalists became popular, it was named as 'Maihar Gharana'. But basically they were following the Beenkar style of Beenkar Gharana of Rampur i.e., the Senia Gharana, since Rampur was the place where 'Baba Allauddin' came to learn at the feet of the great Ustad Wazir Khan who was the descendant of the Senia Gharana from Tansenji's daughter's side.

To speak about Maihar Gharana, it is better to say a few things about 'Baba Allauddin Khan Saheb'. Throughout his whole life, he learnt from many musicians. Wherever he went, when anything inspired him, he just took it. He had a tremendous grasping power. When he finally settled in Rampur to learn from Ustad Wazir Khan Saheb, at that time Rampur was a great seat of musicians. There were almost a few hundred musicians present in Rampur. So Baba used to listen to them and learn from them. Few names as I learnt from my Guruji, that inspired Baba in the style of Sitar playing are — Kallu and Hafiz and Ustad Nasir Ahmed Khan the great Sitar and Surbahar player. He heard and learnt from many musicians

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there and thus after this Beenkar Gharana talim from Wazir Khan Saheb along with his association with the musicians there, he assimilated the whole thing and created a style of his own, which was enriched by the alap, jod of the drupad style of Beenkar Gharana. At the same time in vilambit gat, the Vistar and Tan-s etc., had the Khayal style. In all Tempo-s from Ati Vilambit, Madh-Vilambit, Madhya Drut, Ati Drut he progressed gradually and tried to set his own style to start with slow alap and finish with Ati Drut Gat Jhala. On the top of it, he was very fond of folk Dhuns which has got a very lilting quality. So starting from alap, which has got "Adhyatmic" or spiritual quality; then 'Gat' having 'Romanticism' and finally ending with Dhun which has got that earthy and lilting quality. Baba was very fond of playing Dhun. So it was a pattern which was followed and further developed by Guruji, Ali Aikbarji and Nikhilji. And now it is a very popular pattern and mostly you can hear it anywhere. It is an admitted fact that Baba Allauddin made the canvas much larger of an instrumental music presentation, with tremendous range between the Alap-Jod-Ladi, Lad-Lapet, Jhala, Thok jhala, Tarparan, Dhua, Matha, Kattar etc. — then Vilambit Gat, Madhya and Drut Gat, Jhala, Thumri or Dhun.

One more thing in Gat style also, as it was in Vilambit Gat there were Masitkhani Gat, you know the style which starts from 12 matra like Diri Da Diri Da Ra Da Da Ra Diri Da Diri Da Ra Da Ra..... That was mainly the Vilambit Gat bol used in the gats being played at that time. And that what we call vilambit today, was not exactly the same tempo or laya. It was in what we call madhya-vilambit or madhya laya. They started in this laya (demo - diri da diri da ra da ra). But due to Baba's being influenced by many many musicians and khayal aesthetics and all this, I think he first started and made it much more vilambit laya which was not in practice at that time. In fact, (demo of vilambit laya diri da diri da ra da da ra) was the laya that was used which was further developed by Ustad Ali Akbar, and my Guruji and Annapoornaji.

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Moreover, in drut Razakhani gat-s the pattern was like- starting from 7th matra (demo - dir dir dar dir da dir da ra, dar dar da). This was a very popular pattern or starting from 12 again (demo - da ra dar da dar da da ra da da ra). But Baba Allauddin Khan Saheb created his own style by playing the drut gat from Sam and mainly the jamjama gats. So Jamjama and gat starting from Sam were first played by him which are very popular even now. I am singing one of his compositions in Behag [demo]. This was typical Baba's composition which was starting from Sam and having Zam Zama. This has been further developed by Ustad Ali Akbarji and Guruji and that is not only from 7th matra, khali or Sam but to start a mukhada from any matra and join with tan or tihai. E.g. I am singing one of the gat in yaman which starts one matra before khali [demo]. This is also another style developed through Baba's influence. Not only this, but in those days the gat-s were mostly in teental, either vilambit, madhya or drut laya. But other tala-s like Roopak, Jhaptal, Pancham Sawari, Chartaal Ki Sawari (names of tala) all these tala-s came into practice due to Baba's influence. After Baba, Guruji, Ali Akbar Khan and other musicians played in this style.

Guruji has been also influenced by the few things from Carnatic musical system. Various types of layakari, tihai patterns and joining the uthan or mukhada (12th — matra) etc., are his contributions. Also, ragawise he popularised so many Carnatic raga-s like kirvani, Simhendra madhyam, Charukeshi, Malayamarutam, Vachaspati, Arabhi, Hemavati, etc. As Baba was not only a singer, and instrumentalist but also knew drums, he was a good pakhawaj and tabla player. He also used to play folk Drum, dhol, from Bengal. So this also influenced his style and his compositions. Very surprisingly, we found from Guruji when we learnt, that some gat-s have the patterns of the dhol. Guruji said "This is Baba's influence". One sample about the dhol bol-s being used in drut gat can be (demo — bol-s of Bangla dhol-s). So he used these bol-s in drut gat-s (demo

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— gat). So this is Baba's contribution.

As I said earlier that Baba's association with different musicians and learning from some of them, finally brought out a style of his own which, we call the Maihar style of sitar playing today. After Baba died, (this being the Seminar on sitar, I better stick to sitar only), When Guruji started performing then he was often criticised by some musicians saying "He plays Sarod baj on sitar". Same way Baba was also criticised in his own time "He does not play sarod baj, but plays something different". This was always there. When Guruji, Ali Akbarji and Annappornaji used to learn together from Baba, though Baba was basically a sarod player, he knew many technical things about sitar playing. When he used to teach with the sarod, as you know that sarod scale is much lower. Ali Akbarji was on Sarod, Annappprnaji was on Surbahar and Guruji was sometimes with Surbahar and sometimes on sitar. Guruji used to play the sitar on a much lower pitch almost tuned to B flat. Naturally the sound was very soft. But finally he changed the sitar. Guruji on his part, to get all the varieties of things the Baba used to teach him did some modifications also. With the help of Mr. N.C. Mallick, a long time friend of Guruji, the shape of the instrument, the sound quality etc., was developed. And now it has become a standard of his style. The instruments that we see today, I must say is a contribution of N.C. Mallick who thought a lot to bring about the desired sound quality. That is even when it is played in duet with sarod at a low pitch, it must be louder. That is how the whole body, shape, etc., were improved.

As Guruji felt the necessity of putting ati-kharaj strings — to do justice to Baba's talim of the different styles of Been, Sur singar, Rabab and Surbahar playing, he faced problems also. While playing Drut jor, Jhala, gat Tan Toda, etc., the Ati-Kharaj and Kharaj pancham strings sounded loud and besura (or out of tune) with the loud strokes! Therefore he invented the 'hook' system which were attached on 'parda' (fret), where

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when needed, these two strings can be 'hooked' and tuned to 'sa, ga, ma, pa or dha' — any of these notes suited to the Raga — which gives such a pleasant effect!

Premlataji and Gindeji has said earlier that it is actually not the instruments, it is the music. So sitar is ony the medium. Music comes out through a sitar, sarod or flute or any other instrument from the mind of the musician. And to bring it out or the way he wants, the instrument's shape, sound, making technique has to be modified some times. That is the way it has been through centuries. Sitar was not the same 100 years ago the way we see it today. When we see its pictures, we can understand its limitations. So sitar did not evolve itself. It is the musician behind it who felt to do so. This is how it has been developed.

This is all I can say of Maihar Gharana of sitar playing. I will end with a humble opinion of mine. Even belonging to a traditional gharana, a creative musician can never be a parrot, his creative impulses are bound to burst out with new directions and ideas though they may be based on tradition! As we have seen in the case of Baba Allauddin Khan, Ustad Emdad Khan, and later Ustad Ali Akbar Khan, Pt. Ravi Shankar and Ustad Vilayat Khan!.

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JAIPUR BINKAR/SITAR GHARANA

Presentation by
Bimal Mukherjee

I. THE HISTORY AND ORIGIN OF SITAR

The emergence and rise of Sitar as one of the finest instrumental expressions of Raga music, its nuances and rhythmic development constitute a really fascinating story. No particular person, not even Amir Khusro as the legend goes, invented the Sitar. The instrument is the clear result of a systematic process of evolution in which many master performers and thinkers have lent a hand. Historically, all Indian instruments using strings were called Vinas of different types, the Vina being a generic name for them. Amongst them was the Tritantric Vina an instrument with three strings and frets. How it was tuned is not very clearly known but by the 11th or 12th century it had emerged as an instrument for accompaniment to vocal music and later also as an independent concert instrument. A little later, there was a series of Muslim invasions on North India and the Gangetic plains. The invaders mostly Persians and Turks were not only brave warriors but also loved finer things of life like music. Some of them had brought along with them a small instrument with three strings called "Seh-Taar" meaning three strings. The visitors were greatly impressed by the Tritantric Vina as were the Indian performers by the "Seh-Taar". Then started a process of integration, understanding and assimilation which is typical to the resilience and adaptation potentialities of Indian culture. The emergence of the Sitar was surely a part of this process and no historical date can be mentioned of its invention. Sitar also demonstrated the inherently secular character of our culture and art. By about the 18th Century the Sitar had come to acquire five strings. By stages, the number increased to 7 and from the Sitar later emerged the grand Sur Bahar, an instrument used for Raga Alap only.

As in case of vocal music gharanas, the sitar gharanas also,

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over the centuries, developed their own features. These may be listed as:

i) The tonal quality of the instrument.
ii) The technique of using the Mizrabs (plectrum).
iii) The style and tone of the meeds or graces.
iv) The style of Raga Alap and treatment of the ragas.
v) The nature and structure of compositions in the Vilambit, Madhya and Drut laya.
vi) The pattern of Upaj, Todas and Tanas and the balancing or rapport with the drummer (tabla)

Apart from these, there were characteristics relating to specialisation in certain ragas, forms of Alap or Gatkari from gharana to gharana.

What were the sources of the Sitar gharanas? The sources most clearly were the Dhrupad composition, Raga Alap of the voice and the Raga Alap particularly of the Rudra Bin. All these cast a magic spell over the Sitar players down the centuries. The most powerful influence over Sitar has been Khayal music and the Tarana songs. Historically all the earlier master exponents of Sitar had learnt music from the Binkars and Dhrupad singers. The music of latter is inscribed very deep into Sitar music. Whatever be the claims lately made of Sitar having its own independent baaz and personality, its dependence upon Bin and Dhrupad has been intense and can be discerned even today in the playing of the Sitar maestroes.

In fact in evolving "gatkari" where the Sitar has stolen march even over the venerated Rudra Bin, the reliance has once again been on Dhrupad songs and the Laykari of the Rudra Bin. The Sitar until the thirties of this century clearly had Vilambit Alap, Madh Alap, Jod Alap, Thok Jhala followed by the gat compositions.

The old Sitar Baaz was based on slow movements of Alap and gat intermixed with enjoyable note combinations produced by the Mizrab of the right hand. It was the Jaipur gharana of Sitar

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which produced "Do hat ka Baaz" — that judicious blending of the playing of both the right hand using special bols of Mizrab and the left hand playing notes on the frets with graces, gamakas and tanas. The Sitar also come to develop special 'bols' of the mizrab which were different from gharana to gharana and this helped to develop the technical aspects of Sitar which became typical to Sitar giving it a distinct and separate identity as an instrument.

The impact of khayal or Sitar has been very great indeed. And it is this, perhaps, which can explain the very quick metamorphosis of the old traditional baaz in the last 70/80 years or so with the more recent trends of khayal music. In one word, the emphasis gradually shifted from the right hand to the left hand making possible rendering of swift passages, phrases, tanas and adding to melodic beauty of Sitar playing in practically all the departments.

II. RELATION OF THE SITAR TO THE SURBAHAR AND RUDRA BIN

As an instrumental form, the Sitar is a direct development of the "Tritanti Veena" and the Persian "Seh-taar". Regarding origin of Surbahar, three versions are available. The first is that Umrao Khan Binkar made a big Sitar and taught the instrument to two of his pupils Kutubuddaulah and Ghulam Muhmad Khan. The second is that Binkar Ghulap Mutmad Khan (pupil of Pyare Khan) made a big Sitar entirely for Alap and taught its playing techniques to his son Sajjad Muhmad Khan. The third is that very large sized Sitars with thick strings and Kharaj — Pancham strings were evolved earlier both in the Jaipur Binkar Gharana and the Senia Sitar gharana of Jaipur. Leaving aside controversies regarding Surbahar's origin, the basic fact which emerges is that the Surbahar grew as a subsequent development of Sitar and was shaped and fashioned by the Binkars. The surbahar musically from the Alapi point of view, stood half-way between Rudra Bin and the Sitar. Its playing technique was a happy combination of the Rudra Bin & Sitar. Earlier on, Surbaharis used to pay with two mizrafs and their Alap was an elongated form of Rudra Bin Alap with very long meeds

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but rooted definitely in Dhrupad, Bin and Sitar music. It did have the four stage Alap of Vilambit, Madh, Jod, Thok Jhala intersperd with Tar paran. In time, Vocal, Alap and Khayal gayaki went a long way in giving Sur Bahar its independent baaz.

The impact of Rudra Bin on Sitar (the instrument most proximate to it) was profound and far reaching. Whether it was the use of mizraf, or the application of meed, behalavas, or gamak, the entire range of Alapchari — Rudra Bin was definitely its mentor. The mizraf bols of Dad, dag, dagadadagoda, and Dron of the Bin entered the Sitar in the shape of Da, Ra, Da, Dadid dara, Diridiridara, and various other bol divisions. The paltas of the Sitar developed both on these bols and the beats of various talas. These bols, paltas, and knowledge or raga rupa first helped the formulation of Gatkari in Sitar — the Masitkhani gats, the Sadras taken From Rudra Bin, the Madhyalay gats and the Rezakhani gats. Admittedly in its faster movements and swift laykari, Tanas, todas and upaj, the Sitar definitely stole a march over the Rudra Bin. Since the beginning of the 20th Century Sitarias came to develop their own baaz and repertoire. The fact, however, is that most of the Sitar giants did have their basic training from Rudra Binkars, Dhrupadias and Khayalias and with their imagination and creative capacity gave our music an entirely new direction, sophistication and touch. The Chikari strings, following the Rudra Bin, were introduced in the Sitar by the Jaipur Senias to make four stage alap including Thok Jhala possible. The old Masitkhani gat barred the use of Chikari strings. The real development of the baaz of Sitar chikari followed the development of Rezakhani or faster gat from which point the great Etawah gharana of Ustad Imdad Khan of revered memory carried it to almost unparalleled heights of excellence of variety.

III. HISTORY & EVOLUTIOSN OF THE GHARANA REPRESENTED BY PRESENTER ALONG WITH LEADING PERFORMERS & THEIR CONTRIBUTIONS

At this stage a brief reference to Rudra Bin cult is necessary. However much discarded Dhrupad and Rudra Bin may be today, there is still no dispute that they were certainly parent disciplines

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for all that we have in both vocal and instrumental music. In that case, it would be relevant to talk about Rudra Vina and one of the greatest gharana traditions of that instrument. Legend has it that this instrument was a creation of Lord Shiva and structured after the sleeping form of Goddess Parvati. Rudra Bin in the distant past seems to have been associated with Tantra, worship of Shakti — Lord Shiva, Goddess Kali or Bhavani and thus used to be played in temples. The rich "sound wave formations" (like in no other instrument) was the basic foundation of Bin tantrakari, of Swar production in Raga music, and finding communion with the Supreme Creator. Talim in Rudra Bin was necessarily a secret talim which later came to be called "Khas talim". The Rudra Bin could not be played at high standard without knowledge of the 22 micro-tones (srutis) as against the seven tonal scale. The religious basis of Rudra Bin perhaps accounts for two cult of Rudra Vina namely the Shakti cult and the sufi cult. The Rudra Vina is perhaps the only instrument of consequences which used to be played sitting (in special posture), standing, and even while walking (Pathabrajak Minstrels). The sitting posture traditionally has been the "Vajrasana" and the "Padmasana" which, in both Muslim and Hindu theology, are postures of prayer and obeisance.

At this point, it has to be reiterated that besides Swami Haridas and Tansen, India had produced maestros as great or perhaps greater than Tansen and belonging to other Banis like Khandari, Daguri and Nauhari or even outside these Banis. Such maestros may have lived in obscurity and isolation and never bothered for fame or patronage. Today's craze of being linked somehow to the Senias may thus not appear to be too relevant in the ultimate analysis. Made as we are, even in the 20th century, we cannot shake off legends and myths particularly when we are unable to find documents or facts to sustain them. This, however, is an inseparable part of our musical ethos.

Another strange phenomenon of Rudra Bin music is that its practices and cult Developed in a geographical tract between the Deccan plateau covering mainly what we now call Rajasthan and

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extending to some areas of the North West. Both the Shakti cult and Sufi cult Binkars hailed from this region.

The Rajastan Binkar Gharana of Jaipur and Alwar is amongst the most ancient and venerated Binkar gharanas of India. The tradition, as the legend goes, started with the figure Naik Baiju Rajput (Bakshu) who belonged to the Chowhan clan and worshipped Godess Bhavani. This Rudra Bin player belonged to the period of Allaudin Khilji. Around the 14th century his descendants and kinsmen had to leave lower Rajasthan and migrate to Golcunda in the Deccan. Their sojourn in the South was blessed with the patronage of local rulers and their art of Bin And Dhrupad assimilated some features of Carnatic instrumental styles as well. Around the late 17th and early 18th century, they returned to Rajasthan and spread to Jaipur, Udaipur and Alwar. In the second half of 18th century one Shahji Saheb emerged as a prolific Binkar. He had two sons Rajab Ali Binkar and Khairat Ali Dhrupadia. Rajab Ali had no issue while Khairat Ali had two sons Musaraf Khan and Qutab Ali and a daughter Rehmat bibi. Rajab Ali adopted Musaraf Khan and his son. Rajib Ali trained up Amiruddin Khan (nephew) and Musaraf Khan and these two Binkars trained up Ghulam Ali Binkar, son of Qutab Ali. Musaraf Khan trained up his son Sadiq Ali whose son Asad Ali is now perhaps the lone traditional Binkar in India. On the other side, Amiruddin Khan trained up his son Jamalludin Khan and the latter groomed up his son Abid Husain in both Rudra Bin and Dhrupad. it is my privilege and good fortune to have been trained up as a Shagird by Abid Husain Binkar who also had no issue. Another star Binkar trained up by Jamalludin Khan was Abbas Ali, his cousin, who was a prodigy and died in his twenties when he was known as a wonder Rudra Bin player. Jamalludin Khan also trained up the great Vichitra Bin player Abdul Aziz Khan of Patiala.

Rajab Ali was a highly respected and venerated musician of his time. He was a contemporary of Seni Sitaria Rahim Sen and senior to the latter's son Amrit Sen, the legendary sitar player. The latter were direct descdants of Rajras Khan and Masitkhan

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of the lineage of Bilas Khan, son of Tansen. The Binkars and Seni Sitar players had settled in Jaipur. I have heard not only from my Ustad but ustads of several gharanas that Rahim Sen and Amrit Sen were very intimate with Rajab Ali which resulted in musical exchanges between the two gharanas. The Senia sitar players received guidance in the art of Rudra Bin Alap and laykari and the Sitar players of the Binkar gharana were initiated into the techniques of Sitar and inbibed many bandishes of Senia sitar players. It is here that an integration of Khandari Bani of Rudra Bin and the Gouria Bani of Dhrupad took place. The Senia sitar players were fairly distant from the dynasty of Tansen's son-in-law Naubat Khan (Misri Singh Chouhan) Binkar and there was also rivalry between the two dynasties. The rich Alap style of Senia sitar players bore the stamp of the Rajasthani Binkar gharana led by Rajab Ali. At a later period, there were musical exchanges between Musaraf Khan Binkar of Jaipur and Bahadur Sen of Senia dynasty who was a great Sur Srinagar player of Jaipur and then of Rampur. The Jaipur Binkar gharana after its interaction with the Jaipur Senia Sitar gharana helped to enrich the baaz of Sitar taking it to a high level of excellence as it developed the full Rag Alap technique and sophisticated gatkari. The Sitar bandishes of the two gharanas, as a result, had great resemblance and similarity of structure.

Apart from Rajab Ali, the Jaipur Binkar gharana produced great masters particularly Jamalludin Khan and the prodigy Abbas Khan who died prematurely in his mid twenties. A few words on their prowess as Binkars may not be out of place. Jamalludin was a highly venerated and prolific Binkar. His playing used to bring tears to the eyes of listeners. Shri Satya Kinkar Banerjee of the Vishnupur gharana in his book "Bishnupur Gharanar Itihas" has given his personal reminiscences of Jamalludin Khan's playing in these words:

"If the playing of the Bin were only to create mere sounds or play about with notes of a raga one need not feel sad at the gradual extinction of the Bin. But this was not at all true.

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The first opportunity I had of listening to real Bin was in the Music Conference at Varanasi in 1919. On the first day's morning concert, the State Binkar of Baroda Durbar (Jamalludin Khan) played Desi Todi Alap with two Dhaivats. The listeners were overwhemed and spell bound. Meeds (graces) ranging to six and even seven notes featured in the Alap. The melodic charm and the portrayal of the raga brought tears to my eyes. The performance still lingers in my ears."

Abbas Khan, a prolific Binkar trained by Jamalludin Khan once played Alap in Raga Malkosh in a full Durbar concert at Baroda for about two hours. After him were listed Ustad Faiyyaz Khan and Smt. Kesar Bai. After the recital, both of them said that they felt overwhelmed and wanted the haunting impression of the Bin prevail and wished to be excused from performing that night. Such was the greatness and magnanimity of these artistes of yester years. Ustad Atta Hussain of Agra gharana who was present at this concert himself related this episod to me.

My Ustad, Abid Hussain was a Binkar and Dhrupadia. Apart from being a Binkar & a Sitaria, he was a master of melody, and had a fantastic storehouse of bandishes in diverse fields such as Dhrupad, Dhamars, Khayal, Thumri, Sitar and Rajasthani Filk music. Ustad Hafiz Ali Khan and Ahmed Jan Thirakwa had told me that my Ustad was amongst the few "Kalawants" of this century. The late Ustad Mushtaq Ali was a great admirer and once told me that a meed on Rudra Bin produced by Ustad Abid Husain in Sri Rag from Komal Rishab to Pancham and back had left him absolutely spellbound the like of which he had never heard in his life. The Binkars of Jaipur Gharana were not publicity minded and so they remained "Vidwans" and "Celebrities" amongst connoisseurs only and elite listeners.

Since the fifties, Binkars became more or less extinct. They were tied up with princely courts. Since independence, the Rudra Bin players had not found the way from aristocracy to democracy, from the palaces to Concert halls. The Binkars also lacked in

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preparedness to get adopted to the electronics technology.

In Sitar, this Binkar gharana produced great Sitar players like Shamsuddin Khan, Haider Baksh, Kallan Khan. Of these, Shamsuddin Khan was a distinguished player of Sur Bahar also and he was the epitome of the famous "Do Hath Ka Baj" of Jaipur and very artistic use of the mizraf. If there is any other gharana where this type of integrated play of both hand has been achieved and excellence reached, it is the Etawah gharana led by Ustad Imdad Khan and his very illustrious descendents. Shamshuddin Khan, Imdad Khan and Senia Sitar player Barkatullah Khan were contemporaries. Shamshuddin Khan was the first Indian Ustad to have visited Europe (Rome, Paris and London) in 1894 with a large Sitar resembling the Sur Bahar which was later presented to my late father. This 120 year old instrument is still with me and it sounds exactly like the Rudra Bin. At the end of this presentation, I shall with your permission, play a short cassette piece in Darbari played on this instrument on the lines of Rudra Bin Alap.

IV. EXPLANATION AND DEMONSTRATION OF DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF THE STYLE REPRESENTED BY THE PRESENTER

I may make some general observations on stylistic features before coming to details of playing style. The Jaipur Sitar instruments, leaving aside Sur Bahars were middle sized with seven strings with Kharaj — Pancham strings and Chikari. Fairly thick strings were used and tuned at fairly high pitch. I must confess that I had difficulty in pulling 4 note meeds in my Ustad's Sitar. The old posture of sitting was the left foot folded and the right foot folded upwards. Later the jodasan posture was in vogue. The stroke pattern, except at fairly fast tempo, used the bols Da Ra Da Da Ra Da Da, Ra which was the basis of the "Do Hath Ka Baaz" in which the left hand and right hand were well integrated. The stroke play would clearly indicate the weight of the tanas or gamaks. These bols were scientifically conceived in the sense that the finger bones and the bones and muscles of the right hand would not get tired easily — something like the dynamo of a car continuously using and recharging the battery. We were told that when hearing

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a Sitaria we should watch out the right hand movements and see if any bol pattern was played. The use of the usual Da Ra Da Ra bols all along is indicative of lack of real talim. Today I wonder if these points are at all considered relevant.

Regarding Talas, the talas mainly preferred were Teen Tal (konwn as king of talas for Sitar), Japtal and Ektal. As regards Ragas the important or basic ragas were preferred and efforts were made to show excellence in these ragas. Many Achop Ragas were known but were taught as part of Talim to show how they grew out of or were related to the major ragas. The ragas specialised in were Lalit, Mia Ki Todi, Desi, Asavari, varieties of Sarang, Bhimpalasr, Multani, Puria, Kedara, Yaman, Jaijawanti, Darbari, Malkosh, Bageshri, Miyaki Malhar, Goud Malhar and many others.

Rag Alap as prelude to bandish was always important. Earlier when listeners were musicians or connoisseurs, detailed Rag Alap was followed by bandishes. Gradually, however, Rag Alap was limited to showing the basic movements followed by bandishes to meet changing tastes and constraints of time. There was no practice of Alap in one Raga and bandishes being played in other ragas. The Ustads were so well trained that they could play full scale Alap and thereafter bandishes in one raga itself without sounding repetitive or monotonous. As I have said, the ethos or mahol was different in those days. Today we have to combine many features like Alapchari, Gatkari, Tankari at high speed, followed by Chikari, rapport with tabaliya etc., — but all within constraints of time. The result is a performance combining classicism, romanticism and a fair measure of innovative music.

There is one important aspect of the Jaipur Binkar and Sitar Gharana. This relates to the strong vocal base of the Gharana and the systematic talim given in Raga Alap and Bandishes on the voice, without which, excellence in Sitar or in musical imagination in general was not possible. As in Gayaki bandishes, Sitar bandishes also followed various patterns. Time permitting, some of these Sitar bandishes will be presented.

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BISHNUPUR GHARANA

Presentation by

Manilal Nag

Gharana, as the word suggests, is a school of thought or a particular system or a style in music. Presentation of the same 'Raga' with stylistic variations led to the origin of these 'Gharanas' or schools of music. These Gharanas formed the nucleus of demonstrative art. The glorious heritage of Hindusthani music, as we find it to this day, has been preserved by great musicians of the past who have handed down their rich resources in the classic tradition of **'Guru-Shishya Parampara,** maintaining in each case the individual trends of their 'Gharanas'.

The Bishnupur Gharana of Bengal has a prestigious past, the history of which has little been revealed. 'Bishnupur', the town of Lord Vishnu, is at present a Sub-division town of Bankura district in West Bengal is Mallabhum. Though not vast in area, the region holds a singnificant position in matters as political vigour, civilisation and culture. Historians suggest that 'Mallabhum' had once been the cultural centre of Eastern India. Among its cultural achievements, music had the highest honour. Here I am to discuss some features of the Bishnupur Gharana, along with a few major historical references, that have left indelilble impressions upon the music of Bengal.

In the later part of the eighteenth century and towards the early and mid-nineteenth century, when music of different 'Gharanas' were gradually having their assimilation in the city-centre of Calcutta, the 'Dhrupad' style flourished among the musicians of Bishnupur.To recapitulate history,the Maharaja of Bishnupur was a contemopory of Emperor Aurangzeb. The Seni Gharana was then in full bloom. Its reputation spread throghtout India. Its influence on the music of Bishnupur was enormous. It was around this time that the famous Dhrupad Singer Bahadur Khan of the Senia Gharana, descendant of Tansen, came at Bishnupur and made his Gharana popular. The next Maharaja of Bishnupur, Raghunath Singh Deo II, steered

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his attention towards popularising Bahadur Khan. At this time, the Ustad expressed his desire to settle down in Bishnupur and the Maharaja made all arrangements to honour him as his court singer. The Maharaja also announced that anyone having a sweet voice and interested in music could learn from Bahadur Khan without any fees. He also bore the financial liability for the poor students. In time, a good number of students became the disciples of Bahadur Khan.

Among the disciples of Bahadur Khan, the name of **Gadadhar Chakravorty** is noteworthy. Bahadur Khan was not only a vocalist but could also efficiently play on such instruments as the Veena, the Rabaab, the surashringaar. Gadadhar Ghakravorty learnt from his master both vocal and instrumental music. Among his worthy disciples were such talents as **Ram Shankar Bhattacharya** and **Jadu Bhatta,** whose name spread throughout India.

Most of the exponents of Bishnupur learnt Dhrupad song and instrumental music simultaneously. Bishnupur was at that time the cultural capital of India.

Shree Anantalal Banerjee of Bishnupur was an illustrious musician who had his tranining from Shri Ramshankar Bhattacharya in both vocal and instumental music. Anantalal's sons, Sri Ramprasanna Banerjee, Sri Gopeswar Banerjee, Sri Surendranath Banerjee were prodigies of this gharana. Sri Radhika Prosad Goswami, disciple of Anantalal Banerjee, earned great fame as a Dhrupad singer. Among the students of Sri Radhikaprased were Sri Girijashankar Chakraborty, Jogendra Nath Banerjee and Bhirendre Nath Bhattacharya who won their acclamation in the early conferences of Calcutta. Sangeetacharya Tarapada Chakraborty, Jamini Ganguli, Salien Banerjee and many others learned from Girijashankar Chakravorty. Our great Poet, Rabindra Nath Tagore had his tranings in the Dhrupad style from Radhika Prosad Goswami and Jadu Bhakti of Bishnupur. The Dhrupad style of Bishnupur had a good deal of influence on many of the songs composed by Tagore.

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Sri Ramprasanna Banerjee, the guru of my father Late Gokul Nag, also received his training from Sajjad Muhammed, son of Gulam Muhammed, Sajjad Muhammed was then staying at Jorasanko Rajbati of Raja Sourendra Mohan Tagore of Calcutta. During that time Sri Nilmadhab Chakraborty, the granson of Gadadhar Chakraborty was teaching Raja jotindra Mohan Tagore. Ustad Alauddin khan of Maihar took his lessons in Surbahar from Sri Nilmadhab Chakraborty. Sri Ganendra Prosad Goswami, the nephew of Radhika Prosad Goswami was a very famous musician. He recorded many songs in the Gramophone Co of India.

I have mentioned before the name of Sri Gopeswar Banerjee, a great pioneer of the music of Bishnupur. He was the court musician of the Maharaja of Burdwan, Narajol and Mayurbhanj. He wrote a number of books on musicology as **Sangeet Chandrika, Geet-Darpan, Geet-Praveshika, Sangeet Lahari** and others. Sri K C Dey, the uncle of Manna Dey, the popular light music singer of Bengal, also learned Dhrupad from Sri Gopeswar Banerjee. Kshetramohan Goswami, another maestro in this area, was a disciple of Ramshankar Bhattacharya. It was he who invented the 'Dandamatrik' system of notation in Bengal.

Until a few years ago the name of Late Satyakinkar Banerjee was well-known among the music lovers of Calcutta. Besides vocal music, he was adept in Surbahar and Sitar. Late Shri Nikhil Banerjee and myself, have listened to his playing in his house at Calcutta. His sons, Sri Amiya Ranjan Banerjee, ex-professor of Rabindra Bharati University, Sri Nihar Ranjan Banerjee, Professor of Rabindra Bharati University and Sri Monoranjan Banerjee, are now representing the Bishnupur Gharana, almost in its twilight days, bearing just a few glimpses from its age-old tradition.

I would like to draw the conclusion of my discussion with this opinon that, although every 'gharana' has its own distinctive style of presentation, no creative art can develop within any rigorous binding. Music is the highest among fine arts. Every individual has his own built-up of the mind, his own environmental influences

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that wil leave remarkable traces upon his music. Through his creation the artist, in a sense, manifests his self - the 'Atma'. While presenting his art he is in a state of emotional **exaltation.** Hence, two artistes, belonging to the same 'gharana', need not necessarily have the same way of presentation. Variations must be accepted, otherwise creative music would have become identical with compsed music. The artiste's quest should not be after what **'genre'** he belongs to but after **what he is.**

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INDORE GHARANA
(ABDUL HALIM JAFFAR KHAN STYLE)

Presentation by

Rajendra Varman

As my Ustad Abdul Halim Jaffar Khan is on a concert tour at Mysore and Bangalore, he has entrusted me the duty of talking to you about the Indore gharana of Sitar playing. Therefore, after consulting with Khan Saheb, I am reading this paper.

The tradition of Indore gharana of sitar playing began in the second half of the 18th century. Ths list of follwers of this gharana - Ustad Wahid Khan, his contemporary musician Ustad Bande Ali Khan Sahab, Halim Jaffar Khan Sahab's grandfather - Murravat Khan Sahab, Murad Khan Sahab (beenkar), Abdul Latif Khan (beenkar), Mohmad Khan Desai Faridi, Ustad Rajab Ali Khan (vocalist), Babu Khan Sahab (beenkar), Mushraf Khan (sitariya), Osman Khan (been), Gulam Rasool (sitar), Rehmat Khan (sitariya who settled in Dharwad), Nazir Khan of Jaora, Mohamad Khan (Beenkar, Sitar) Chopatiwale, Jaffer Khan, Amanat Khan (vocalist), Krishnarao Raghunathrao Ashtewale, Krishnarao Kolapure (Pandharinath Kolhapure's father), Dewaskar Bhaiyya (vocalist), Sajjad Hussein Khan (whose name is mentioned by Bhatkhandeji in the Kramik Pushtak Malika (vol.IV), Ustad Amir Khan and so on. All these musicians took the art of singing and sitar playing to great heights. Ustad Abdul Halim Jaffar Khan Saheb also hails from the same tradition. It is a characteristic feature of Indore gharana that the followers of this gharana have settled only in placed like Indore, Dewas, Jawra, Jabalpore, (Madhya Pradesh), whereas many other musicians came to these places from elsewhere and were influenced by the tradition of Indore gharana.

The Jaffarkhani baj has its own style that effectively utilises the twelve different technical components for the gat development through the duration of 16 matra-s. The necessity of employing such components arose from the fact that the masitkhani gat has

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some fixed bol-s and they are incapable of bringing out the subtle nuances of many raga-s. The mizrab-s fixed in a particular laya are unable to bring out correct raga form. Therefore, keeping in view the demands of appropriate raga projection, embellishments like meend, murki, jamjama, uchat, khatka, etc., are played using the index finger and the middle finger through the duration of each matra. Hence the skill lies in developing these components effectively to fill the duration of each matra. Thus the usage of 12 components is an essential feature of this baj.

Let us consider bandish-s in raga-s like Sindhu-Bhairavi, Pahadi, Madhyami, Madhyamad-Sarang (both Vilambit and drut) - we observe that

1. Echoing of notes in higher octaves from a given note.
2. Usage of jhala-only at the end of concert. this is alap, jod, vilambit gat, drut gat and then jhala — thonk jhala.
3. Stages of jod along with progression the use of two strings simultaneously whenever required.
4. Chapka ang
5. Ladhant baj
6. Tha-dugan baj
7. Uchat Ladi
8. Gat Bharan
9. Jhar Bharan
10. Gat-ang chala
11. End of thonk jhala
12. Use of darda, dra rda, sur, jamjama, and uchat throughout the 16 matra-s in order to bring out clear picture of the raga, (with the fraction of matras filled in with ghaseet, kan and different varieties and variation of meends)

This baj does not end here. This was the message by Khansaheb.

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SENIA GHARANA AND SANGIT ACHARYA USTAD MUSHTAQ ALI KHAN

Presentation by
Debu Chaudhari

Friends, the topic which I will discuss today is mainly based on the contibutions of SENIA GHARANA and particularly of my late Guru DR. USTAD MUSHTAQ ALI KHAN SAHEB. It is quite amusing to come across so many Gharanas today viz: INDORE GHARANA, MAIHAR GHARANA, JAIPUR GHARANA, VILAYAT KHANI GHARANA etc. on SITAR.

There is nothing wrong in having Gharanas if they are based on a solid foundation, but unfortunately the tendency of the modern Gharanas is to bye-pass and ignore the basis and foundations on which Gharanas exist. It is said, a Gharana cannot be established unless it passes three generations. But there is a slight contradiction in this August Seminar, where the present Masters' contributions were the high-light, rather than focusing the contributions of our Great grand fathers and Gurus, who laid the foundation, of what we have today.

Ustad Mushtaq Ali Khan Saheb, my respected Guru, never wanted, that his name should come in the fore-front. He rather wanted and firmly believed and used to say - "Whatever we have today, we all should be thankful to our great Masters". Although he had a lot of contribution in the field of SITAR PLAYING, his Music had a definite style of his own. He never wanted to mention his name as an introducer of a new style even for a moment. I will quote some of the portions of his interview which was published in the "Sunday Telegraph" in Calcutta on the 13th July, 1985. It may be recorded that his statement on the subject was not challenged so far, by any one. On the contrary a letter was published in 'DESH' (Bengali Weekly) in support of Ustad's historical revelation on our TRADITION, Gharana, SURBAHAR and history of the fifth VANI called DHADDVANI from the time of NAYAK DHUNDHU. This

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VANI was also known as RASALVANI for its appealing beauty. Let me quote a few lines, as my Ustad said to the interviewers — "Jaggu Khan and Makkhu Khan, who were famous Dhrupad singers, were awarded some property in Varanasi by Jahandar Shah, the eldest son of Bahadur Shah Zafar, which we still happen to possess. These two brothers were my Great Grandfathers. Makkhu Khan was childless, so he adopted Waras Ali Khan, who received extensive Veena Taalim from Ustad Bade Muhammed Khan. As Ustad Bade Muhammed Khan was also without any heir, he too adopted Waras Ali Khan and taught him exclusively. When my father, Ustad Ashiq Ali Khan, was only six years old, my grand father Ustad Sadaq Ali Khan son of Jaggu Khan, died, so his uncle Waras Ali Khan taught him all the intricacies of VEENA on the SURBAHAR. That is why, we play the SURBAHAR with three Mizrabs. The use of three Mizrabs started with Waras Ali Khan.... positioning of the right hand fingers for the Veena is such, that the three principal Bols - Da, Ga and Ra can be produced .. .. in the "SURBAHAR" the finger-hold is different and so THREE MIZRABS are necessaary for the production of the same bols .... but nowadays I find many artists playing it, in a Sitar style." .... "some believe that the actual instrument was invented by Zafar Khan and Pyar Khan, but it is not knwon definitely. Ghulam Muhammed Khan and his son, Sajjad Muhammed Khan who used to stay in Calcutta, were renowned SURBAHAR players. Ustad Imdad Khan and Jnanoda Mukherji were also two of his disciples. Prof. Chaudhuri added useful aside: "Guruji's first National programme of Surbahar was broadcast in 1953 .... One of the first persons to congratulate him for his performance was Pandit Ravi Shankar acclaiming him as the greatest Surbahar Player".

...."Explaining how the Senia Sitar style came into their Gharana, Ustadji provided a very cryptic but clear description of the 'guru-shishya' lineage commencing from Masit Sen, the originator of the first concretely formulated Sitar Baaj and a direct sixth generation decendant of Mian Tansen. By SENIA I mean, of course, the instrumental tradition that orginated from

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MISRI SINGH, who was Tanses's son-in-law .... Previously the SENIAS used to play on a 16-fret SITAR. But later, another DHAIWAT was added, so that a technique called 'GADDA' could be used which involves the production of a note without striking....

"However, unacceptable and Paradoxical the truth may seem, it is actually the maestro's strength of character, his unrelaxed ideals and his utter refusal to adulterate his standards, for audience benefit that has forced him into his present isolation"....

A genealogical tree chart of Khan Sahab's ancestral history (enclosed) will show the relation of Khan Sahab, his father with Masit Sen, the originator of MASITKHANI BAAJ (style).

Khan Sahab's father late Ustad Ashiq Ali Khan had the fortune of learning from USTAD BARKAT-ULLA-KHAN who was a great musician of his time. Ustad Barkat-Ulla-Khan's name is always taken with the JAIPUR SENIAS with utmost respect. His Music, but also had a tremendous command over his instrument. Who so ever heard Ustad Barkat-Ulla Khan, still remembers his spell over his Sitar. It is often said that there was no match for him during his time and he was regarded as a player who never performed any RAGA in a casual manner. A word about JAIPUR SENIA SITAR GHARANA may be interesting for all of us. The Senias of Jaipur were perhaps the only Sitar players who could take the pride of having their lineage directly from MASIT SEN. They were also known for their faithfulness towards their tradition and maintaining the purity of RAGA.

There is a tendency today to decry the contributions of SENIAS. It is not a myth, but it is based on a soild foundation. It is a sad day for Indian Music that we are all trying to forget our Great Masters' contributions. I am proud to say that my Guruji taught me to remember the good qualilties of all the great Masters and their ideals for which they sacrificed their lilves. My Guru was a Great Master, who wanted to propagate the value and purity of Music, which he cherished and maintained till his death. His

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way of playing a RAGA was a lesson for every one, because using of each note in a particular RAGA, was minutely handled with utmost care. He believed and also practised with the principles of RAG-ADDHYAY in minute details. He never used any SWARA in a RAGA against its character & spirit. Khan Saheb always use to say that one must be honest to his Music. His honesty was so much evident in his music that, any body could find out the extent of the purity of a note, which Khan Sahab used to apply in a particular RAGA. Unfortunately, such restrained performance can hardly be heard these days from our players. His BANDISHES have a distinctive flavour and any one who knows Music, would be able to identify instantly.

Khan Sahab never played MASIT KHANI compositions in public after the fiftees, because he used to say that, his style of MASIT KHANI BANDISH will not be understood by the modern generation. I used to argue with him and try to convince him to play rich compositions of MASIT KHAN, AMRIT SEN & RAHIM SEN. When I heard those composition from my Guru, then only I realised what he meant. I also realise today, when I hear MASIT KHANI compositions from the average musicians. Today what we hear is a SKETCHY picture of the MASIT KHANI style, and one can ascertain the fact of my statement from listening to the performances in the All India Radio or elsewhere, because most of the compositions are being played in simple manner, without maintaining the Bole (STROKE PATTERNS) and ignoring the value of composition and the basic structure i.e. the STHAYA. One can hardly hear ANTARA today from the musicians, and least to talk about the 'STROKE PATTERNS' of MASIT KHAN's style. I have seen (thanks to the television) people talking about MASIT KHANI style but not following the STROKE PATTERNS. These are all matters of record.

GURU-SHISHYA-PARAMPARA

USTAD MUSHTAQ ALI KHAN SAHAB had the fortune of having a link with Stiar player GHARANA right from MASEET SEN, after whose name MASIT KHANI style (BAAJ) originated. In fact Maseet

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Sen the originator of MASIT KHANI style, is the first to give the Art of Sitar playing, a definite syle and from him, we come across great names of Guru to Shishya or father to son, like Sukh Sen, Bahadur Sen, Rahim Sen, Amrit Sen, Ustad Barkat-Ulla-Khan and Ustad Ashiq Ali Khan. This is just to give an idea how rich is this GHARANA. My Guru's Music was also influenced very much by BEEN and DHRUPAD STYLE. In this style or playing, one can come across the rarest and the purest form, as it is derived from BEEN-ANG and DHRUPAD-ANG. It is often said, that in this style, specially in MASIT KHANI style, one is not expected to use TIAs. Speciality of this style is in its Music. The application of MEEND without any "MURKI" is, perhaps, the only style existing in India. Because application of MURKI has become the fashion of the day, one applies even if it spoils the character of the RAGA. It is only the SENIAS, particularly our GHARANA, in India which plays Sitar with 17 FRETS only. So far the LAYA is concerned, there are three stages of JOD. There are various specialities of this GHARANA and surprisingly enough, many people play this technique such as "GATBHARAN" "THONK JHALA" and many other technical aspects,but they claim to have such aspects, as their "own style", which is far away from truth and history, of the SENIA GHARANA and insturmental music.

Playing a GAT from the 7th beat is also Ustad Mushtaq Alil Khan Sahab's speciality and hallmark. Traditionally speaking, in the earlier days RAZAKHANI GAT had many varieties, but Khan Sahab made at least 400 compositions which started from the 7th beat. This is a great contribuation by Khan Sahab, to Indian Music, which many musicians love to play.

Those who have heard Khan Sahab playing SUR-BAHAR will agree with me that, he played it in a purest form of BEEN-ANG, because he believed SUR-BAHAR should represent the purest form of DHRUPAD and BEEN style. His Art of playing SUR-BAHAR had such a perfection and purity that, many great musicians including late USTAD RAHIMUDDIN KHAN DAGGAR, used to say "here is a great artiste who really maintained the BEEN-ANG in SUR-BAHAR".

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The future generation may not know after 50 or 100 years what a Artiste he was, who sacrificed his own life, shunning all cheap publicity, in order to project and maintain the purity of our traditional style. He never played SUR-BAHAR with the accompaniment of TABLA which is against the spirit and tradition. He firmly believed that SUR-BAHAR should be played in the style of BEEN and BEEN is never palyed with TABLA accompaniment. He gave some memorable performances on SUR-BAHAR, not only in the All India Radio's National Programmes, in the early fifties, but also in some rarest public appearances. His playing technique with three "MIZRABS" has now become a history now. A time may come when people might be shocked to know that SUR-BAHAR was played with three MIZRABS in BEEN-ANG. We may not live long to see this state of affairs, but it will become a part of history.

It is a sad day today, as there is no senior musician who whould point out openly in public, if some musician is performing something wrong, particularly in relation to the exposition of RAGA. Those were the days, when musicians were much more careful in performing before other learned musicians, because they knew it quite well that they cannot get away (as today) by doing anything whatever they liked. We may not forget today while talking of GHARANA, one can hardly come across any learned musician, seating, in front in the audience or in any 'MEHFIL'. This, perhaps, be the reason that our modern generation is taking much liberties as they like. As a result, the future generation is the worst sufferer. Things change and evolution is a must, but that does not mean that we forget our responsibilities and duties towards our tradition and Great masters. Today there is a tendency of claiming, that "I have done this and I have done this". I wonder when this "I" will go from us, and concentrate more for maintaining the purity and tradition of our Music.

My Guru paid a heavy price for this particular aspect because, he strongly believed that SENIA GHARANA has given to the Indian Music the greatest truth of being honest and the only GHARANA which is insturmental in the creation of many GHARANAS of today.

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I remember, many musical performances by my Guru during my association of 45 years with him. I have never seen him wasting his time in negative discussion about other musicians, but I have always found him discussing RAGAS and traditional vocal and instrumental compositions, whenever he came across with great masters. He even had the fortune of learning DHRUPAD and PAKHAWAJ from Great masters. I recall one incident in the year 1948, when Khan Sahab challenged the TABLA with a particular FARMAISH in the presence of many great musicians of India, assembled in the All India Musical Conference, held at ROXY THEATRE in the year 1948 sponsored by late LALA BABU. This shows and reflects another side of his life and how he had learnt the subject (pakhawaj and Tabla) and also had a command over it. He was a true SENIA, a true MUSICIAN, and fought for maintenance of purity of tradition till his last breath. To maintain such a difficult and thorny path, he had suffered a lot, buy never forgot to mention that SENIA GHARANA is the only GHARANA, which only can prove the application of a particular note in a particular RAGA with logic, and this was his last word to me "Always be faithful to your music".

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VILAYAT KHANI GHARANA

Presentation by
Arvind Parikh

No one will dispute that today Sitar is one of the most versatile and popular instruments. Over the period of its evolution, it has become a very mature instrument and is capable of expressing the raga form completely without any loss of the finest shade of the emotional expression. Various stages through which a rag is presented on the Sitar like Alap, Jod, Gat, Toda-s, Tan-s and Jhala leave no stage of development of the raga untreated. It has now become a most mature, self-contained and complete instrument.

There are many theories regarding its origin and at the outset let us understand various points of view which unfortunately have resulted into controversies.

SITAR - PHYSICAL EVOLUTION
Theories relating to origin

1. Sehtar was the instrument brought by Yemannudin Abdul Hasan or Amir Khusro from Iran. Seh meaning 3 and Sehtar mening the instrument with 3 strings. According to this theory, it is believed that the Sehtar was modified to suit Indian musical requirements and the Sitar was thus invented by Amir Khusro in the 13th Century.

2. According to some Scholars, Sitar was the modified version of another plucking instrument called 'Tritantri Veena', which was very popular at that time. Some Scholars believe that this change was brought about by Amir Khusro while some others maintain that it was somebody other than Amir Khusro, since this modification was brought about much later than Amir Khusro's time.

3. According to very recent findings, Sitar was invented by Sadarang's brother, Fakir Khusro Khan who lived in the 18th Century.

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Well-known Scholars and musicologists have raised several doubts about the theory that Amir Khusro invented sitar

i) They argue that there is no reference to Sitar in any of the well known and acknowledged treatises until 18th Century. In fact, Sitar does not appear in any of the paintings, sculptures, etc., pertaining to period prior to 18th Century. On a perusal of literature pertaining to Akbar's darbar, we note the names of many eminent musicians and musical instruments, but no mention of Sitar or its exponents is noticed. It is therefore surmised that Sitar could not have been invented prior to 18th Century.

ii) Some Scholars maintain that sitar can't be a modification of Iranian "Sehtar" as the two instruments are completely different in character, shape, size and technique of playing. It is difficult therfore to accept the theory that sitar was a modified version of "Sehtar".

In view of the above, one is tempted to accept the theory that Sitar is a relatively recent invention i.e., during the period, of 18th Century and it could well be that Khusro Khan, brother of Sadarang who lived during this period, was the inventor. Factually, even if we trace the family tree of present Sitar players, we are unable to go back in the history beyond 200 years. Therefore, this theory seems to be the most plausible and acceptable.

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENTS:

The evolution in the physical form of Sitar relates to the shape, size, material used for making the Sitar, number of strings used, methods of tuning, number of frets, etc.

1. It is believed that until the later part of the 19th Century, the instrument was totally made of papermache were also used. However later on, dried pumpkin was used to make the tumba or the resonator. This enhanced the resonance of the instrument. Addition of one more resonator also facilitated the amplification of sound.

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2. Originally, Sitar had three strings. They were tuned to'Ma', 'Sa' and 'Sa' or 'Ma'. 'Sa', 'Pa'. Later on, two more strings were added which were tuned to 'Sa' and the higher octave 'Sa'. During the second half of the 18th century, two more strings were added and the complete 7 strings tuning was in this order - 'Ma',Sa, Sa, Pa, Pa (Kharaj), Sa and Sa (one octave higher). By the beginning of 20th Century, thirteen additional sympathetic or "tarab" strings were introduced. They are located underneath the main strings in a parallel direction to the main strings over a small, flat bridge. These are tuned to correspond with various notes of the rag to be played. In accordance with the principle of resonance, the tarab strings vibrate in tune with the vibrations of the notes played on the main strings. Thus, the resultant sound is enriched in both quality and volume. The slightly smaller size of the tumba and a specific jowari treatment of the bridge helps the performer to meet the desired tonal requirement of the performance style.

3. Until the 19th Century, 2 types of fret arrangements were in vogue. Sitar with 'Achala-that', or arrangement which did not require movements of frets, had 24 frets tuned to half steps from 'tivra madhyam' of the lower octave to the 'madhyam' of the upper octave. 'Chala-that' (requiring movement of frets) had 17th frets. By the end of the 19th Century, the number of frets was increased to 20 on the 'Chala-that' Sitar. The frets tuned to 'Komal Ni' in both the lower and middle octave as well as the fret tuned to 'Komal Ga' in the middle octave were introduced.

Thus, we see that the physical evolution of Sitar was influenced by several factors, such as, material used, manner of arrangement of strings, number of tumbas used and the number of frets employed. Today, the Sitar in its present form is a highly developed and versatile instrument.

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STYLISTIC EVOLUTION

After having traced the physical evolution of Sitar, we would now refer in the following, to the various stages through which the styles of Sitar playing have been developed.

1. It appears that initially, Sitar was used as an accompanying instruments, to be played during Qawali performances. The left hand rested on a particular note while the right hand played bols like dirdir, dara dara etc., in quick succession, with a view to fill gaps between the melodic phrases sung by the performing vocal musician. This style was known as 'Poorak baj'.

2. Over the years, Sitar emerged as a solo instrument and hence amorphous gats were introduced in it's repertoire. Gradually, pakhwaj bol-s were incorporated in Sitar playing. The melody was played by left hand while the right hand played the bols representing the rhythm.

3. During the next stage of development, small phrases known as "Fikre" were introduced to aid the improvisation of pre-composed gats. Thus, the role played by the left hand became slightly more singnificant, though it still remained subsidiary to that of the right hand.

4. Gradually, small meend-s were introduced to embellish the notes and as a result, the prominence of the left hand was further elevated. The "alap" phrases were of rather simple nature devoid of any ornamental elements and major melodic movements were on frets. Around this time it is said, that the great masters of Sarasvati Veena or Been did not teach this instrument to anybody outside their family. Therefore, to teach the students outside family, Surbahar could have been evolved from the base of Sitar. This instrument incorporates the elements of both the Veena and the Sitar. It is larger in size when compared to Sitar, only the pitch is much lower.

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5. Next phase was the introduction of drut gat-s in the faster tempo. All Masit-Khani gat-s are played in slow tempo but not vice-versa. Similarly all Raza-Khani gat-s are played in faster tempo but the reverse is not true. During Mohamad Shah Rangile's time, a lot of "Bandish ki Thumris" were composed. These were sung in Madhyalaya to accompany Kathak dance. These compositions according to one theory were adopted to play on Sitar and thus was established the origin of Razakhani gat-s. One finds more of these in ragas like Khamaj, Kafi, Pilu, Zila, etc. To-day, however, any fast gat played in Tritaal is called Raza-khani, which is not necessarily a correct nomenclature.

6. The next stage represented a judicious presentation of alap, job, vilambit and drut gats and jhala. The rag was now projected completely through all these stages and Sitar achieved a status very near to vocal music performances.

GHARANA TRADITION

It is believed that the traditioin of gharana system in vocal music is about 300 years old and is essentially related to khayal singing - the earlier classification for Drupad style being in terms of bani-s (Gauhar bani, Nauhar bani, etc) and still earlier in terms of different mat-s (Hanuman mat, Bharat mat, etc). In instrumental music, we find that the various styles rendered through different categories of instruments are not classified in terms of distinct gharana-s though we do come across specific names of gharana in Tabla playing such as Delhi, Banaras, Lucknow, Ajrada, etc. With special reference to Sitar as well, we do come across different styles being desingnated with specific gharana nomenclature and could be summarized as follows.

Imdad Khani (or more recently Vilayat Khani) gharana, Maihar gharana, Senia gharana, Jaipur - Sitar beenkar gharana, Vishnupur gharana, Lucknow gharana, etc.

With this background and before we analyse the special features of Imdadkhani or Vilayatkhani gharana, it would be useful to define

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a gharana in all its dimensions. This is to clarify issues like.

1. What is a gharana? and
2. What are its distinguishing features?

Literally translated, a gharana basically means a family. The style of that gharana means the style initiated by a particular family of musicians. By and large the nomenclature of the gharana or style is related to the city/town in which the initiating musician resided such as Rampur, Gwalior, Patiala, Kirana, etc. On the other hand when a particular musician added an outstanding dimension to a perticular style of vocal or instrumental music, then his gharana is known by his name. e.g. Imdadkhani or Vilayatkhani gharana or Pandit Ravishankarji's style of sitar playing, etc.

In essence, a gharana is established through the medium of specialization. Any musical performance can be divided into the "matter" of music or 'babat' i.e., **what** you play and the "manner" of playing that is 'tarika' or **how** you play. It is commonly believed that whilst the various gharana-s have common denominators in the area of the **matter** which could cover even the rag forms, the technique utilised for the presentation of the raga would differ from gharana to gharana and in fact, this results into specialization to which we have just referred to. There could be various facets of specialization and we may briefly refer to those - Emotional content of a presentation could be the first from of specialization. The emotional content or the undercurrent of a presentation could be the first form of specialization. The emotional content or the undercurrent of a particular rasa has also been noticed to establish certain amount of specialization to distinguish one gharana from the other. Kirana is basically 'Bhakti' or 'Shanta' rasa oriented, Patiala could be 'Shringar' rasa based, Agra could be 'vira' rasa based and so on. It would not be appropriate to say that a gharana projects only one basic rasa - In fact, the rendition is not oriented only to a particular rasa and utilises the elements of several rasa-s while emphasizing one basic rasa.

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The second dimension is in fact a corollary of the element of the emotional content. The importance and therefore the length of different stages of raga presentation i.e., alap, bandish, tan-s, etc., could be governed by the undercurrent of the basic rasa that the particular gharana emphasizes. Hence, the alap in kirana gharana utilises the 'badhat' or the unfoldment of the raga on a step by step basis and is both lengthy and involved. On the other hand, we note that both in Agra gharana and Patiala gharana the alap form is relatively shorter. Gharana-s like Jaipur, Patiala, Agra, etc., give significant importance and emphasis to the tan portion of a presentation.

The third facet of specialization would be the "Sahitya" or the bandish i.e., the composition. Kirana gharana as has already been said, gives greater importance to alap, that is melodic unfoldment. Hence the "sahitya" becomes relatively less important. On the other hand, the bandish-s of Agra, Gwalior etc., gharana-s are of high literary value and the performers utilises the deeper meaning of the "sahitya" in their renditions.

Specific raga-s become favourites of different gharana-s depending upon their mood and their inherent laya. This could be the fourth dimension of specialization. Over the period, raga-s like Darbari, Abhogi, etc., are favourites of Kirana gharana musicians while intricate raga-s like Sawani, Goud-Malhar, Nat, etc., are favoured by the Jaipur gharana musicians. However, I hasten to clarify that this is not a basic or fundamental evaluation. My remarks should be considered in a general manner only.

The fifth dimension of specialization could be the choice of tal-s and their laya. Kirana gharana musicians use tal-s like "jhumra' i.e., a very slow tempo taal. On the other hand Agra gharana uses vilambit ektaal and Jaipur gharana often uses vilambit teental. It would be easily agreed that the choice of tal-s and the laya at which they are played is definitely governed by the general aptitude of the musicians of a particular gharana.

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The final or the sixth facet of specialization could be the technique of voice production developed by different gharana-s. This point would be very easily appreciated as we are all familiar with the fact that the Patiala gharana uses open throated voice while Kirana uses a softer and controlled voice production technique. Agra and Jaipur, Sehswan and Gwalior once again have their own special timbre of voices. A supplementary of specialization in using the technique of voice production could be the manner in which the fluidity and the ornamental phrases like Murki-s etc., are relied upon by the performing musicians belonging to different gharana-s. These remarks are no doubt related to vocal music traditions of Gharanas - But the same remarks with slight modifications, can be applied to instrumental music forms as well. Major styles of sitar playing definitely express their own and individual approach, resulting into specialised renditions.

The next issue to be considered is the utility of the gharana system or the role that the system should or could play. We have already referred to the specialization which in essence the gharana system is based on. We have also analysed the different dimensions of this specialization.

When it is commonly accepted that specialization is not only necessary but highly beneficial to any area of human activity, how can we then question the utility of gharana system in music? A lot of keen and deep introspective thinking has gone behind the establishment of a gharana through specialization of the rasa or mood, emphasis on alap, or tan rendition, the sahitya or literary content, the selection of the raga-s and tal-s and finally the voice production techniques. It takes 2 or 3 generations for all these elements to mature and crystallize and it is truly said that a gharana cannot establish itself in a few years. It requires 2 or 3 generations to evolve and establish. What is unfortunate however is that certain negative elements have crept in the gharana system over a period of years, as a result of human frailities resulting into subjective assessments, inability to appreciate the styles of other gharana-s, exploitation for financial gains and finally short-sighted behavior

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of the noted musicians and so on. The absence of gread Ustads in the present time - barring a few celebraties - has also added to the problem. Then of course the availability of modern day gadgets like tape-recorders, radio, T.V. etc., have provided easy and economical means to learn as compared to the discipline that the Shishya has to follow when he learns at the feet of the Guru in the Guru-Shishya Parampara. But then the quality suffers and frankly has suffered. Reluctance of some of the great musicians to give vidya dan without reservations has further added to the problem. Personally, I am a great supporter of the gharana system, and I would urge that efforts should be directed not to destroy the system but to remove the negative elements that have crept in the system.

VILAYATKHANI STYLE

We have already clarified earlier, that it is the technique of presentation which results into specialization and therefore into the creation of a style. The stylistic evolution which we have earlier elaborated in detail, presents a specific graphic picture. Originally a pause-filler, since the time Sitar achieved the position as a solo instrument, it was Drupad based and the rhythmic element freely used pakhawaj bol-s played through the mizrab of the right hand. Gradually the left hand executing the dignified movements of the Drupad ang - devoid of murki-s developed into quicker and faster movements executing gat-toda - again regulated by the right hand. Still later on, we notice the influence of the khayal elements with distinct features of murki-s and brisk tan-s which had a definite impact on the style of sitar playing. The right hand and the left hand which were utilised with equal importance and involvement, in a later period witnessed a greater role being played by the left hand - more significantly in the alap portion. We could therefore surmise that the stylistic evolution is a progressive development from the Drupad ang based Sitar to a Khayal ang based sitar. It is however incorrect to believe that any present day style of sitar playing is completely Drupad based or completely khayal based. Therefore, one can observe that we have individual sitar styles or gharana-s, by and large, utilising the technique of Drupad or

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khayal.

The Vilayatkhani style or Vilayatkhani baj is a lucid and methodical amalgamation of the Imdadkhani and Enayetkhani baj, added to which, are the new dimensions introduced by Ustad Vilayat Khan. In our baj, we have all the unique facets of the great Imdad Khan Saheb, the melodious and introspective vision of the saintly Ustad Enayet Khan and of course the great contribution of innovative dimensions of my most respected Ustad Vilayat Khan. No discussion on Imdadkhani or Vilayatkhani baj would be complete without dwelling upon the remarkable contributions made by great Ustads and masters of this gharana viz Ustad Sahabdad Khan (Imdad Khan's father), Ustad Imdad khan, Ustad Enayet Khan, his brother Ustad Wahid Khan and the illustrious Ustad Vilayat Khan.

We assume that Imdad Khan Saheb followed in the footsteps of Ustad Sahabdad. "Riyaz" was the hallmark of Ustad Imdad Khan. Several interesting and impressive anecdotes about his meticulous riyaz are too well known to be recounted. It is also said that he had perfected a few choice raga-s like Yaman and Puriya - so much that it is said that when Ustad Imdad Khan was participating in the music function, usually nobody else played these raga-s.

The stage of evolutionary development that the Sitar had reached during this period projected a style that was very right hand oriented. Though the left hand had certainly started playing a greater role than hitherto, the performance had not yet reached a stage of 1 note - 1 mizrab - rather there were many strokes of mizrab used for executing a single note. The style of Ustad Imdad Khan - and we have several records of this great master, reflects a highly perfected right hand playing intricate Bol-s executed with sparkling and fantastic clarity and with what speed!! Whilst the alap was impressive, it was relatively simple and Khayal type of murki-s were evidently absent and instead drupad type of meend-s are noticed. We note that the Gat-s were based on masitkhani style and the Gat content covered gat-toda-s introduced on tabla bol patterns. Tan-s, specially in the drut-gat of razakhani style

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were executed with pre-dominant use of the right hand i.e. Dirdir type of bol-s executed with the right hand playing 2-3 or even 6 mizrab or strokes for each note. Lot of Bol-s or mizrabs were used in the composition of the drut gat-s as well. The emphasis was clearly on perfected and polished execution at a phenomenal speed which leaves the listener wonder-struck. So, to summarize the prominent features of the styles of Ustad Sahabdad Khan and Imdad Khan, we note that the right hand was very prominent and its control and power was used in the perfect execution of the Vilambit gat, gat toda, drut gat, tan, jhala and double jhala - Alap was relatively simple and devoid of Khayal ang Murki-S relying more on drupad ang Meend-s. This is noticed more clearly on listening to the Surbahar records of U. Imdad Khan. It is no wonder that Ustad Imdad Khan played Surbahar so well for it is believed that Ustad Sahabdad Khan, his father invented this great instrument. (I am aware that there might be some different views on this matter).
(Demonstration of Ustad Imdad Khan's record)

When we attempt to understand Ustad Inayat Khan style, one is immediately struck by the introspective and devotional undercurrent. To the existing Imdad Khan baj, he added a contemplative quality of his own personality and this made his music richer, deeper and sombre. In addition, Enayat Khan made significant contribution in the area of manner i.e., "Tarika" or actual technique. In the alap, we discern pleasing and deftly executed Khayal type murki-s. On Surbahar we notice elongated meends covering the entire octave. On the Sitar, 3 to 4 note meends are introduced. In the gat-s, we notice swiftly executed Sapat tan-s, using the principle of 1 note - 1 bol. Ustad Enayat Khan introduced tihai-s on sitar. He introduced and refined tarab-s on Sitar. He introduced several innovative patterns of Bol-s. The jhala portion, once again is sombre, meditative and as some great musicians said takes one to the stage of "Samadhi". His record of the raga Bhairav is a vivid example. In Ustad Enayat Khan we have a judicious combination of techniques of polished crystal clear execution along with highly spiritual and saintly undercurrents. (Demonstration of Ustad Enayat

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Khan's record).

Ustad Wahid Khan, the great Surbahar and sitar player - brother of Ustad Enayat Khan had developed and perfected the technique of Surbahar playing and had inherited great treasure of Khandani talim. His technique of Sitar playing as we notice from his records was simple and charming. It clearly reflects the rigorous riyaz that must have gone into making him the versatile musician that he was.
(Demonstration of Ustad Wahid Khan's record).

With the entry of Ustad Vilayat Khan, at a very tender and young age of 8 or 9 years, it was evident that the world of music in India had grown richer. If we hear his two records played with Ustad Enayat Khan on one side and he on the other, justifies our observation that even at such a young age, Ustad Vilayat Khan had been fortunate in receiving very good talim from his father. The fact that at about the same age, he gave a performance in the Allahabad music conference with his father, speaks volumes for the young and talented Sitariya. Over the years, Ustad Vilayat Khan shifted his residence from Calcutta to Delhi, then to Nahan and then to Bombay. When we hear his Columbia records of 1940s we still notice Ustad Vilayat Khan's playing substantially reflecting Ustad Enayat Khan's style and the sitar also similar to Ustad Enayat Khan. It is after this stage that we find striking changes in his style. Enriched with the vocal music talim from his maternal grandfather Ustad Bande Hasan, Ustad Vilayat Khan introduced the gayaki ang on Sitar which added a new dimension to the Khayal ang based sitar playing. It would be useful to dwell on the theme of gayaki ang. Some critics claim that all instrumental music basically follows the tradition of vocal music. So what is new in this Gayaki ang? Let me clarify. Sitar is a plucking instrument. Every stroke produces a note which has a limited sound duration. On the other hand a bowing instrument like sarangi has a longer and sustained duration of notes which could be monitored by the player. Ustad Vilayat Khan introduced a left hand technique whereby the continuity of a note for a much longer duration was achieved. He used this

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asset to project a lyrical and continuous flow in his music, closely following the vocal music. In addition, he introduced highly intricate and difficult khayal ang murki-s executed with religious adherence to murki-s produced by the voice. All these resulted into a style with a lilt and lyric of it's own, evolving a fluid music. Many rightly exclaimed that - "His sitar virtually sings".

And then of course, the famous tan-s of Ustad Vilayat Khan. In addition to the gat-toda, tar-paran-s and the techniques used in the earlier period, Ustad Vilayat Khan introduced many tan patterns of diverse ang-s. His vilambit and drut gat-s cover sapat tan-s, choot tan-s, gamak tan-s and tans of several other varieties. Apart from the type of tan-s, the execution of each variety of tan-s follows patterns of great vocalists of different gharanas.

No doubt, the introduction of Gayaki ang is a very important contribution of Ustad Vilayat Khan to the stylistic evolution of the sitar. This covers his individual style of alap, jod, gat-s - both vilambit and drut and jhala so beautifully perfected by his great ancestors. The right hand techniques of Ustad Imdad Khan, Ustad Enayat Khan and Ustad Wahid Khan were further researched upon by Ustad Vilayat Khan and he introduced several varities of diverse execution.

His is an illustrious family of musicians who are all followers of this enriched style. His brother Ustad Imrat Khan, his son Shujaat Khan and Ustad Imrat Khan's sons, Nishad Khan and Irshad Khan and ustad Wahid Khan's grandson Shaheed Parvez are all torchlight bearers of the Vilayatkhani Gharana. In addition there are several outstanding sitar players amongst the "Shagirds" of the Gharana.

A word about the contribution of Ustad Vilayat Khan in the field of light classical music would be appropriate at this stage. His rendition of Thumri, Kajri, Barsati, Bhatiali, Dhun, etc., are very well known. His short pithy recitals of Tappa on sitar are a marvel, which as sitar players, all of us would acknowledge as a very difficult achievement.

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(Demonstration of Ustad Vilayat Khan's record)

As a natural corollary to the individual style that Ustad Vilayat Khan created, the sitar as an instrument has necessarily to undergo some basic changes. Let us enumerate the physical changes that he introduced.

1. His execution of intricate murki-s, gamak tan-s and five note meends required a much stronger base i.e., the tabli - the tabli had also to be strong enough to absorb the tremendous power of right hand strokes. The think tabli was replaced by a much thicker tabli which could sustain the heavy pressure transmitted through the bridge.

2. The bridge had also to be changed with two ends in view. Firstly, it had to be strong and of a quality that would suit the round or heavy jowari that Ustad Vilayat Khan desired. The 2nd change in the bridge was related to the height. In addition to the special shape of the tabli, the legs of the bridge were also required to be higher which would enable the strings to be placed at a greater distance from the frets. How can we produce the gamak-s and meend-s without an arrangement like this?

3. It would be easily understood that the forceful execution through both the left and the right hand required an extra strong mechanism which joins the 'dand' with the main tumba. Metal screws and special techniques were used for this purpose.

4. The tar-gahan or 'aad' had also necessarily to be thicker. It had to suffer a much stronger pull. Ustad Vilayat Khan has modified the curvature of the targahan as well for special sound production.

5. Likewise the frets had also to be thicker and their metal had to be much stronger. Brass was replaced by German Silver. The shape or the curve of the frets was also designed to enable proper, easy and accurate execution of the meends.

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6. Not least important are the changes that Ustad Vilayat Khan made in the arrangements and the guage of the strings. The seven string sitar was made into 6 string sitar. One jod string was removed with the view to have less vibrant jod sound and giving a greater scope for clearer execution of the bol-s by providing a greater distance between madhyam and jod. He replaced the kharaj pancham string by a steel string which in my humble opinion is a revolutionary change having far reaching implications on the sound of the sitar. The strings are tuned at the higher pitch than the earlier sitar-s. The C sharp pitch has been selected to suit the size, the shape, the thickness of the tabli and the jowari of this newly evolved sitar. The result is so profound and striking that a mere 'chedchad' or strumming of such a sitar is immediately recognised as a Vilayatkhani sitar.

There are several other supplementary changes that Ustad Vilayat Khan made : such as the removal of upper tumba, a screw style device instead of the usual manka to increase or decrease the pitch.

We have analysed so far, the contributions made by Ustad Vilayat Khan both in the stylistic and physical evolution of the Sitar - no wonder that the impact the resultant Vilayatkhani Baj has created is far-reaching and spectacular.

In my capacity as his humble student, I have endeavoured to outline speical features of our style - our Gharana - on the basis of the Talim, I have been fortunate in receiving from Ustad Vilayat Khan for the last forty years and more. As a part of our Talim, we are also taught to respect other styles - other musicians. Hence in my presentation, if I have transgressed the limit of decorum or discretion, please do excuse me.

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